

I-90 Four Lakes to Idaho Operational Study

Interstate 90 (I-90) through the Spokane area was completed in 1974, and since that time, the Spokane region has come to rely upon the interstate as an essential transportation corridor for the regional and interstate movement of people and goods.

As the region's population has grown, traffic volumes have increased on I-90 through the years. Higher volumes, combined with crashes, construction zones and other incidents have increased the operational strain on I-90.

The I-90 Operations Study, sponsored by the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT), is examining strategies for improving safety and managing traffic flows on the I-90 corridor over the next ten years.

A Least-Cost Planning Approach

WSDOT uses "least-cost" planning principles to make decisions about how to invest in Washington's transportation system. In this study, practical solutions that maximize benefits for travelers without adding new lanes to I-90 will be examined.

STUDY PURPOSE

- ◆ Identify locations and types of crashes and other safety-related incidents occurring on I-90 and the surrounding local street network.
- ◆ Work collaboratively with local governments on near-term strategies for addressing safety and operational issues in the I-90 corridor.
- ◆ Provide opportunities for community input and feedback as study information and findings are developed.
- ◆ Recommend and prioritize strategies to be implemented, including timeframes, costs and benefits.



In addition to heavy volumes during peak periods, many other factors affect the safe and efficient flow of traffic on I-90. Some examples:



Weather

Heavy rain, fog, snow and ice, and even sun glare can create hazards for travelers, contributing to crashes or leading to slowdowns as drivers react to changing roadway conditions.



Planned Events

I-90 needs to efficiently accommodate a wide range of planned events that are both short-term, such as community events and transport of over-sized loads, and longer-term, such as maintenance and paving projects in the corridor.



Crashes

Traffic crashes can have substantial social, financial, and health costs, and can significantly impact mobility on the corridor. The I-90 operations study will emphasize strategies for reducing the risk of crashes in the corridor.



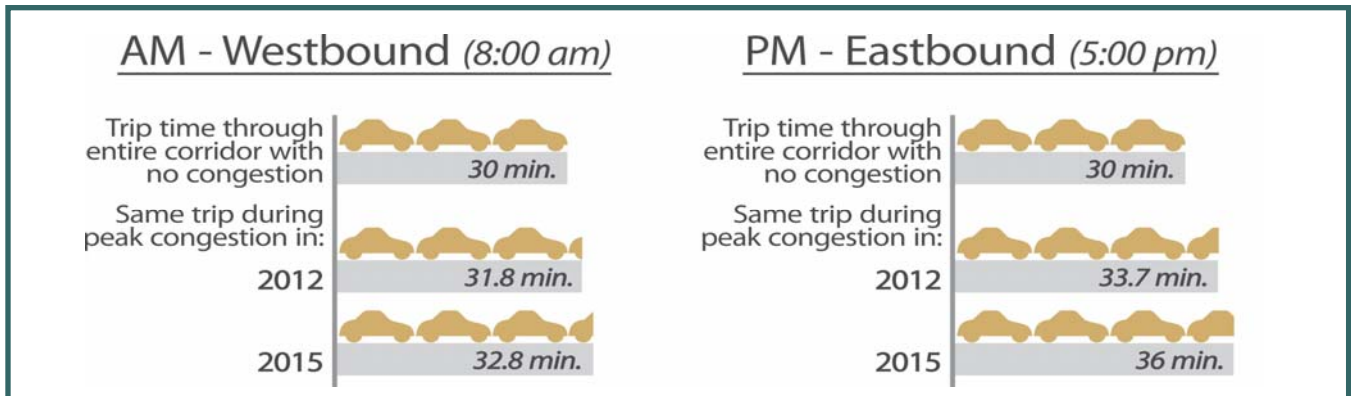
Other Non-Recurring Incidents

Many other unforeseen events, such as animals on the roadway or disabled vehicles, can affect the safe operation of I-90.

I-90 Existing Conditions

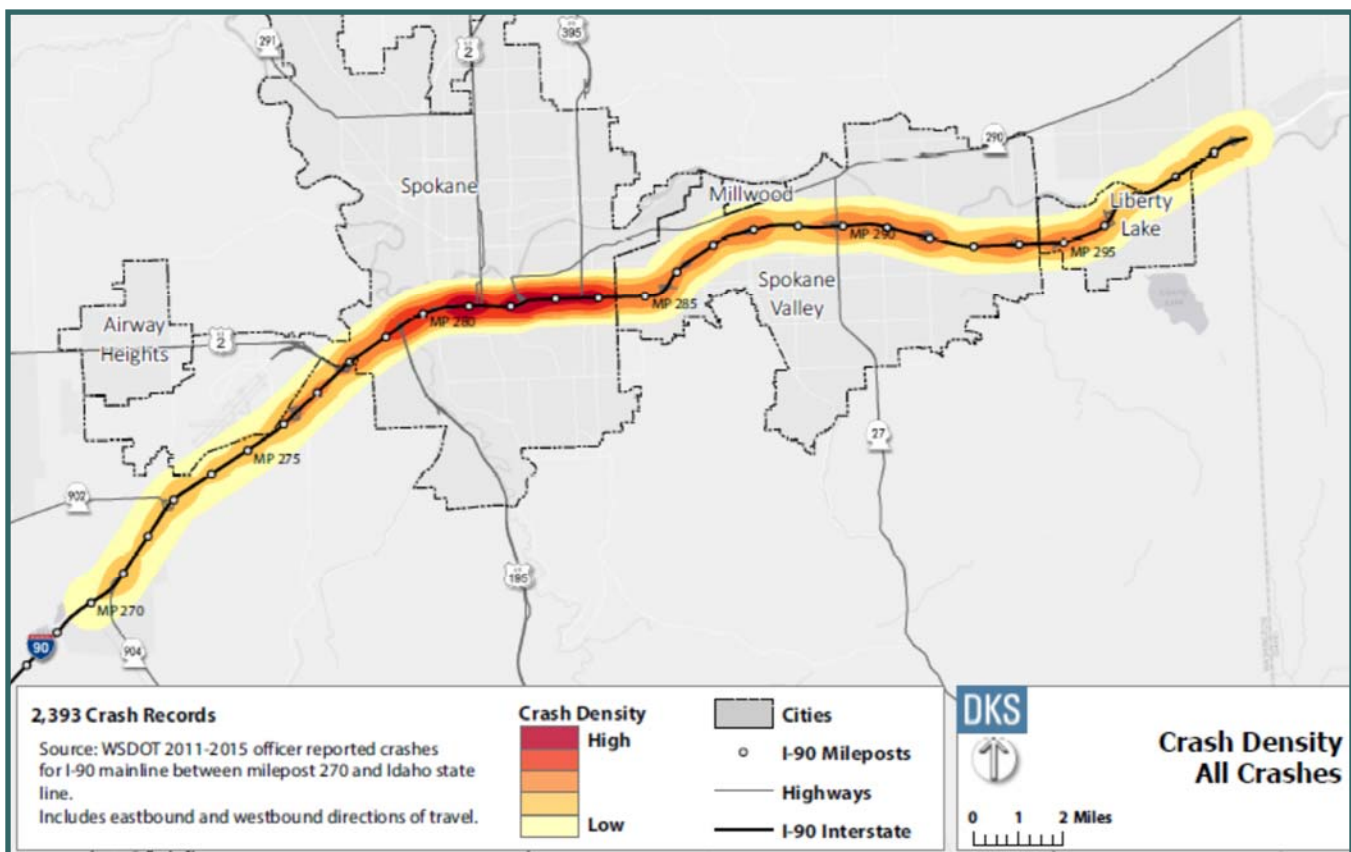
Mobility and Reliability Trends

During peak travel periods, motorists experience longer travel times on I-90. This trend is most pronounced westbound in the morning and eastbound in the evening, as workers travel to and from jobs in the urban core. Congestion and travel time reliability issues are more likely to occur during these times.



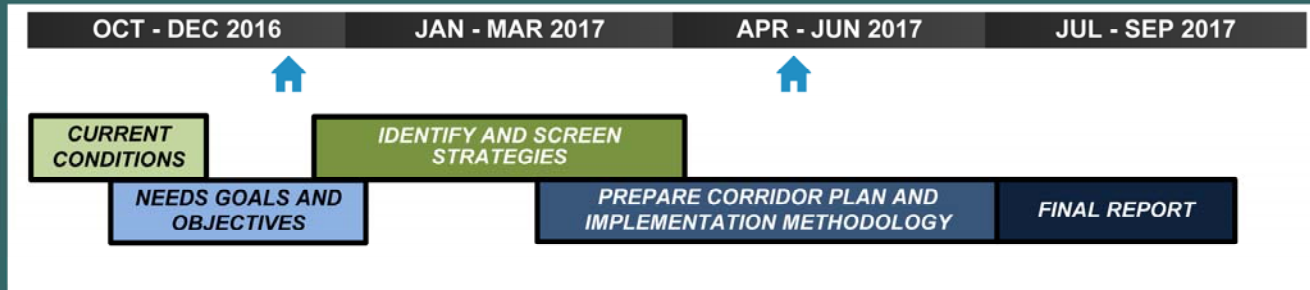
Safety

The portion of I-90 from the US-195 interchange to the eastern limits of the City of Spokane has the highest frequency of high-severity crashes in the study corridor. The eastbound direction has a higher crash rate than westbound. Exit 280—the Maple Street/4th Avenue/Walnut Street exit—incurs the most crashes of all interchanges in the study area. Inclement weather conditions, such as ice, snow or water on the roadway, are significant contributing factors.



Stay Involved!

I-90 OPERATIONS STUDY TIMELINE



LEGEND: Public Open Houses

The I-90 Operations Study will take approximately 10 months to complete, and technical findings will be made available as the study unfolds. There are many ways to learn more about the project and to provide comments:



Attend a public open house.



Find project information online at:

<http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/planning/studies/i-90-four-lakes-idaho-operational-study>



Send a comment letter to WSDOT Eastern Region Traffic, 2714 N. Mayfair Street, Spokane, WA 99207



Send an email to WSDOT's Eastern Region Assistant Traffic Engineer at frostal@wsdot.wa.gov

Contact

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